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Farm Bill Passes by Veto-Proof Margin

By Dan Morgan

Special to The Washington Post
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The House yesterday passed a final version of a new five-year farm bill by a vote of 318 to 106, a margin large enough to override [President Bush's](#) promised veto of the nearly \$300 billion measure.

The bipartisan show of support came after intense lobbying by a coalition that included farm groups, anti-hunger advocates, environmental organizations and the biofuels industry. While continuing traditional farm subsidy programs, the bill increases spending on nutrition programs such as food stamps by \$10.4 billion.

Agriculture Secretary [Ed Schafer](#) released a statement saying the vote "sends the wrong message to the rest of the country who are not experiencing the boom of the agriculture sector," and, "This bill is loaded with taxpayer funded pet projects at a time when Americans are struggling to buy groceries and afford gas to get to work."

Bush has charged that the bill allows payments to wealthy individuals. He has also criticized restrictions on the use of food aid dollars in the midst of food shortages abroad, and he said that protectionist provisions, including "an egregious new sugar subsidy program," could worsen trade relations.

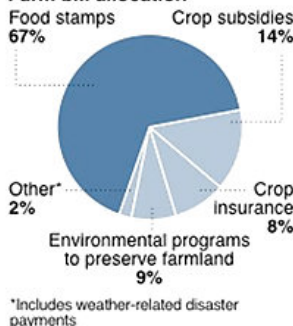
Congressional backers were elated by the 3 to 1 vote ratio. "After this vote, it's pretty much clear that we can override," said House Agriculture Committee Chairman [Collin C. Peterson](#) (D-Minn.).

Morgan is a contract writer for The Post and a fellow at the German Marshall Fund, a nonpartisan public policy institute.

Bulk of farm bill for food stamps

More than two-thirds of a five-year farm bill will be distributed to food stamps and other domestic nutrition programs.

Farm bill allocation



SOURCE: Congressional Budget Office AP

Chart shows farm bill allocations (Damiko Morris - AP)

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